

Fallston Community Council Meeting Notes January 25, 2011

Attendees: Dave Williams, Larry Kreis, George Twigg, Tony Dec, Andy Amasia, Jim Riley, Joyce Eaton, Morita Bruce

Guests (and organization represented): Joe Woods (County Council District B), Patricia Gonzalez (County Executive's office), Cpl Donald Hopps (HC Sheriffs Office), Roman Ratych (Grater Fallston Association), Stephen Spoerl, Janet Crane

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Dave Williams.. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The next FCC meeting is March 22, 2011.

Sheriff's Office

Cpl Hopps provided Community Policing statistics for our area. He noted crime reports were up slightly from last December, and that those responsible for the recent rash of bank robberies are believed to have been captured. Most burglaries are occurring while people are away during the day, and we were reminded to lock garage doors -- criminals are using tools in the garage to break into the house. Criminals checking for unoccupied houses may knock on the door with the excuse that they are looking for work. Security surveys are available from the Sheriff's Department for free, during the day, by calling 410-638-3625.

State & County Government

Patricia Gonzalez (410-638-3511) was introduced. She will alternate attendance with Jane Walker after Jane returns.

Joe Woods said a new electrical substation, "Bagley Station", will be installed near the corner of Harford Road and Route 152, located in the woods behind the Park & Ride. Construction will take about 2 years and will include high voltage towers and connections. A public hearing will be held (for information only) on the same evening as the school redistricting meeting. Contact is Bonnie Johansen, BGE Public Relations.

Councilman Woods also announced that the first meeting of the Abingdon Community Council will be held on February 28 at 6:30 in the Abingdon Library.

Andy Amasia asked if Ms. Johansen could help with the Jones lighting issue. Mr. Woods will be meeting with her tomorrow but a walk-around still needs to be scheduled.

Other announcements and information from Councilman Woods:

- Parks & Rec checks Astroturf for hardness every 2 years, and some fields have been found to be too hard; they will be repaired under warranty.
- County Council meetings have moved and will be in the Board of Education building.
- Acme is closing, and may be replaced by another small grocery. That property is on a flood plain and has a public water main through its middle, severely limiting redevelopment by owner JML Enterprise.
- There's a traffic safety meeting on January 27 with Delegate McDonough and SHA regarding Route 1 access and safety issues for Wilgis Road.
- Carrs Mill needs a turn lane. The new Oakmont Extension road for Brandywine subdivision is being designed and is funded but negotiations continue with the owner of the property.

New Business & Community Updates

Jim Riley and Joe Woods reported about Inspections, Licences and Permits. Earthwork is underway on Business Route 1 at the end of Old Joppa Road. Per Jeff Stratmeyer, no building permits have been applied for. Owner Mike Euler is using it as a quarry (dirt and rocks) and parking lot. If the mess in the road isn't cleaned up, fines will be imposed. The Watervale

bridge and Bear Cabin Bridge are being worked on, road widening is underway at the new WalMart, and the priority for the Carrs Mill intersection improvements was bumped up.

Dave Williams noted the importance of tracking DAC (Development Advisory Committee) meetings for properties in our area. Jim Riley and Morita Bruce will work on this.

Roman Ratych announced the upcoming Greater Fallston Association Annual Meeting and invited all to attend. The meeting will include presentations on the Fallston area of the Master Plan, Sheriff's Department, MD Department of the Environment (MTBE), and others.

Dave Williams described the new rescue pumper and ambulance being procured for the FVFC, and thanked the County Council for approving the long-sought home sprinkler ordinance, which takes effect for new construction begun after January 1, 2012. He noted that sprinklers will help with flashovers like those that killed a firefighter recently in Perry Hall. Other fire concerns are the vacant Acme, and chimney fires in homes.

Speaker - Harford County Master Plan

Morita Bruce, President of Friends of Harford, gave a presentation on Harford's Master Plan and the Fallston Community Area Plan. She described the Master Plan / Land Use Element Plan, the other Element Plans, Community Area Plans (Fallston is one of 12) and explained how they all fit together. Copies of the Fallston Community Area section of the Master Plan were handed out, as well as a list of thought-provoking questions to consider for our area.

The relationship between the Land Use Plan and zoning was described, and handouts from Friends of Harford were provided describing what is meant by the various Residential, Business, Industrial, Village, Rural Residential, etc zoning categories. Maryland's smart growth goals and principles were also discussed. Attendees were invited to peruse the Master Plan and Zoning links at www.FriendsOfHarford.com for more information or to ask questions online.

She concluded by urging everyone to participate in Planning & Zoning's upcoming public meetings and to let them know what you want in Fallston, since the Master Plan will determine what happens here in the future.

Discussion about "opening up Fallston for development" and its impact on school overcrowding, lack of interest from residents until it's too late, whether FCC wants to take a position on YBES redistricting. There was agreement that we disagree with the current plan because the process used was faulty and lacked parent input.

Andy Amasia talked about the Hinder (car dealership) property on Business Route 1 that was sold to Jones (car dealership). Jones has put up lots of extremely bright lights and expanded the parking lot by cutting down the trees protecting the houses behind it from the lights. He said Jones will replant some of the trees but not until spring. Neighbors want the lights turned down or off late at night. Larry Kreis suggested using a county mediator. Dave Williams asked Patricia Gonzales to send a letter asking Jones to show what things they're doing now (e.g. is tree-planting under contract? When might a fence go up? Put lights on a timer?) and to send the information to Andy Amasia.

Andy Amasia and Morita Bruce were reelected Vice President and Secretary, respectively.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Submitted by Morita Bruce and Dave Williams